

Message Text

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17

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-01

COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-06 SAM-01 OES-03

SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 FEA-01 PA-01 PRS-01 ITC-01

ARA-06 /095 W

----- 130576

R 180902Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8170

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L COTONOU 0303

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: EINV, PFOR, DM, US

SUBJ: MOBIL INDEMNIFICATION CLAIM AGAINST BENIN

REF (A) COTONOU 247, (B) COTONOU 183,

1. MICHEL BONNET, REGIONAL DIR MOBIL OIL (BASED IN ABIDJAN) PAID COURTESY CALL ON MIN OF FINANCE ISIDORE AMOUSSOU FEB 17 TO DISCUSS INDEMNIFICATION FOR MOBIL'S INTEREST NATIONALIZED IN DEC 74. MIN WAS UNABLE TO DISCUSS SUBSTANCE AS ALL HIS PRINCIPAL COLLABORATORS WERE AWAY TAKING MONTH-LONG IDEOLOGICAL TRAINING IN PORTO NOVO. (THIS COURSE, WHICH IS SUBJECT SEPTTEL, IS BEING RUN WITH ASSISTANCE OF TWO CUBANS, AND IS PARALYZING GOVT. DIRECTORS OF NEARLY EVERY STATE-RUN FIRM AND TOP CIVIL SERVANTS OF MOST MINISTRIES HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO ATTEND.) THE COURSE RUNS THROUGH MARCH 15, WHICH MEANS GPRB WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GET DOWN TO SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS UNTIL AFTER THAT DATE. BONNET WAS NOT DISTURBED BY THIS NEWS. HE SAID MOBIL HAS WAITED 14 MONTHS, SO THREE MORE WEEKS WILL MAKE NO DIFFERENCE.

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2. BONNET REPORTED THAT MOBIL KNEW THAT USG WAS PUSHING IN-

DEMNIFICATION ISSUE HARD WITH GPRB AND THEREFORE MOBIL WILL
TAKE FIRMER STAND IN NEGOTIATIONS THAN IT MIGHT OTHERWISE HAVE.

3. MOBIL HOWEVER WISHES TO REMAIN IN THE GOOD GRACES OF THE
GPRB AND ITS PETROLEUM COMPANY SONACOP. SONACOP, APPARENTLY
DISSATISFIED WITH THE PRICE AND SERVICE IT IS GETTING FROM
ALGERIA, HAS APPROACHED MOBIL ABOUT BECOMING ITS REGULAR
SUPPLIER OF GASOLINE AND GAS OIL. IN THE PAST YEAR MOBIL
HAS SUPPLIED SONACOP 1000 TONS OF LUBRICATS.

4. FYI: MIN OF COMMERCE AND TOURISM ATCHADE HAS ASKED CHARGE
TO MEET WITH HIM FEB 19. PRESUME SUBJECT WILL BE INDEMN-
IFICATION. PLAN TO RAISE MATTER OF THIS FURTER DELAY WITH
ATCHADE.
CHESHES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NATIONALIZATION, CLAIMS, INDEMNIFICATION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976COTONO00303
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760060-0447
From: COTONOU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760241/aaaabjey.tel
Line Count: 76
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 COTONOU 247, 76 COTONOU 183
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 JUN 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <05 OCT 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MOBIL INDEMNIFICATION CLAIM AGAINST BENIN
TAGS: EINV, PFOR, DM, US, MOBIL, (AMOUSOU, ISIDORE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006